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Hamilton classis asks Council to retract homosexual rights statement

Marian Van Til

ANCASTER, Ont. — Classis Hamilton of the Christian Reformed Church has asked the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC) to retract a submission to the government regarding homosexual rights and same-sex "marriages."

The decision was made at the September 18 classis meeting in response to an overture from the council of the Ancaster CRC.

The submission by CCRCC's Committee for Contact with the Government (CCG), and a letter to Justice Minister Alan Rock from Reinder Klein, a research and communications associate with the CCG, were presented to the government and to Minister

Rock as "the public sentiments of the CRC," said Classis Hamilton. But those sentiments "are in conflict with the expressed mind of the Synod of the Christian Reformed Church" as laid out by Synod 1973 in its report regarding homosexuality.

Classis also said the churches were not consulted "in order to achieve some consensus on this matter." Furthermore, classis asserted that "this is not the first occasion where the CCG has run ahead of the churches in speaking to the government."

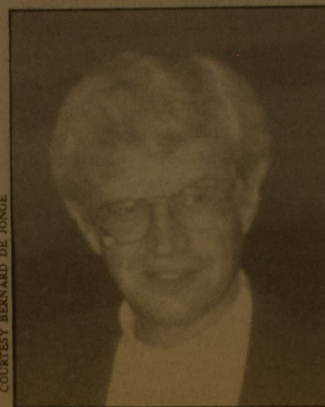
A question of justice?

CCG's submission to the government was concerned with "inclusion of sexual orientation for particular protection from

discrimination" in Canada's human rights code. While saying that it affirmed the CRC's 1973 "biblical position" — "homosexual practice is incompatible with the will of God" but "sexual orientation itself should not be a barrier to full participation in the church," — CCG concluded that "the issue of benefits for same-sex couples is clearly related to some of the questions about public-justice-for-everyone in Canada."

CCG encouraged the government to enact "appropriate legislation ... ensuring that there is protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation with regard to housing, employment, and services."

CCG's main intent, it said,



Bernard De Jonge of Ancaster CRC which sent the overture.

was that the government ensure that it be illegal to arbitrarily discriminate against gays and lesbians.

Reinder Klein's letter to Justice Minister Rock, however, added a different dimension. While the letter expressed concern for the "broadening definition and "apparent and growing elasticity" with the terms "marriage," "spouse" and "family" are understood, it then went on to suggest that "mutually supportive relationships of a private and perhaps intimate nature other than those understood by the familiar and historic terms ... should be given a new designation ... [namely], domestic partnerships."

On behalf of CCG and the CCRCC Klein then called for such partnerships to be registered "much like 'traditional'

See **LETTERS** page 2...

CRC seeks new energy through multi-media rallies



Darlene Koldenhoven training the "Free to Serve" choir.

James Kwantes

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. — The Christian Reformed Church in North America has been rocked by dissent, disagreements and defections in recent years. In fact, the controversy over women in ecclesiastical office and other issues have often overshadowed the positive stories of the good things that are happening within the denomination, the leadership believes.

So, starting October 20, the CRC is celebrating the positives in the denomination with a series of "Free To Serve" multi-media rallies in seven cities across North America. The purpose of the event is two-fold, says Peter VanderMeulen, producer and co-director of the rallies: to celebrate God-inspired individual and small-group ministries in the CRC, and to broaden the appeal of ministry throughout Christian Reformed congregations.

"There is so much need for getting together to look at the good stories instead of focusing on all the fighting we've done,"

says VanderMeulen, noting the CRC's tendency towards focusing on the negatives. "New energy and new inspiration is exactly what we as CRC folk need."

Raising consciousness

The rallies will include ministry success stories — told on large-screen video — from each of the local areas where the rallies are located, music performed by regional mass choirs and African rhythms performed by a group of musicians from

Sierra Leone, and drama and lyrical dance.

"We're going to fill the stage with music, color, rhythm, energy and dance, and hope that God is glorified," says VanderMeulen of the rallies, which will involve an estimated 1,500 people. He calls the production a "consciousness-raising event" that he hopes will be the tip of the iceberg for a revitalization of CRC ministries.

The cost for the production is See **ENTERTAINMENT** p. 2...

In this Issue

Tymen Hofman remembers Rouveen p. 10
Domestic violence and children p. 11
Peetoom and VanderVennen discuss
"church" stories p. 12

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News

Letters show 'double mind' on homosexuality

... continued from page 1

marriages are" so that the partners could have "rights and privileges similar to the spousal benefits married couples now enjoy."

Via the Ancaster CRC overture, Classis Hamilton expressed concern that the CCRCC submission and Klein's letter exhibit a "double mind" on issues related to homosexuality. The church can't tell gay and lesbian members that their sexual relationships are wrong while telling the government that such relationships deserve the rights and -privileges of heterosexual marriage. "We could rightly be charged with hypocrisy," says Rev. Bernard De Jonge of the Ancaster CRC.

The overture also argues that the church can't say that we need to honor the historic understanding of family, marriage and spouse while at the same time saying that human rights are based on an "established" or "common law."

The overture maintains that "if we were secular politicians who stood on no particular moral-ethical grounding, then such a statement would be safe. Citizens would have common rights based on common morality, a morality determined by citizens themselves. But we are not secular politicians who base human rights on common moral law. We are Christians governed by biblical morality and we can never speak in any other voice than as Christians."

Three guiding principles

Bernard De Jonge and his church council say there are three "guiding principles" by which this whole debate should be reformulated. They set out these principles in a letter addressed to the CCG a week before Classis Hamilton met. The entire CCRCC and Classis Hamilton also received copies of the letter.

First, we need "prophetic consistency," said the Ancaster letter. The church — in this case, the CCRCC — must speak from "an integrally biblical faith stance"; that is, we must declare to the government what we would declare to the church. This is in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets: "Our public witness is not to be at odds with our profession of faith."

Second, we need to be "Kingdom advocates," says the letter.

"In our increasingly secularizing times, government of the people, by the people, for the people will advocate a common public morality at variance with the morality of the Kingdom of God. In Revelation, the antithesis of these two worldviews comes into sharp [focus]. It is the urgent responsibility [of] the church [to] serve as advocate of the Kingdom of God, aiding and abetting its progress."

The third principle set out in the letter is "rule of principle, not persons." The Ancaster CRC council notes that "the Kingdom of God is a vision of principled

society, people ruled by and submitting to laws which our God has described in his Word.... It is our responsibility to submit human nature to the principles of God's Word and not submit God's Word to what may suit our changing human nature."

Went too far

No one from CCRCC or CCG attended the September 18 classis meeting. CCRCC executive secretary Rev. Arie Van Eek was traveling in the Middle East, and Reinder Klein and local CCG members were unaware the classis would address an overture related to their government submission.

Klein, however, admits that "I went too far," saying on behalf of the CCG "something the committee had not decided." Klein is sorry the letter went out. "I regret it very, very much," he says. "And I regret

the negative press [the letter] has brought to the CCRCC and CCG. I would be more than willing and eager to retract the statement."

CCG chair Rev. Bill Veenstra, pastor of the CRC in Maple Ridge, B.C., says, "The statement about domestic partnerships is not part of what the CCG subscribes to. But we want to take some collective responsibility for the letter."

"Domestic partnerships" came up in discussion in the CCG because the government was discussing the issue, says Veenstra, but endorsement of government recognition for such relationships shouldn't have been part of the letter to Justice Minister Rock. When the CCG met two weeks ago in its semi-annual meeting, it reviewed the way it makes public statements, "building in some check and balances and protections," Veenstra ex-

plains. "Reinder will meet with the two local (Ontario) members of the CCG executive once a month" to discuss how the CCG will respond to specific issues. A letter or statement would then go to Veenstra and go out over his signature as chair of the committee.

Veenstra notes that the CCG must keep in mind all Canadians, not just Christians, when it responds to the government. "We do abide by the '73 [synodical] decision [regarding homosexuality]," he says. "We want to protect what marriage is. But the government has to be a government for all its people. Major companies like IBM are recognizing homosexual relationships [in their benefits packages]. Such relationships exist, and the government can't bury its head in the sand. While we don't like it, we have to have a way to deal with it."

'Entertainment missionary' leads music at CRC rallies

... continued from page 1

about \$600,000 U.S., which includes \$100,000 used to produce a "Free To Serve" CD and cassette. The costs will be picked up by two large CRC donors "who saw the need for a program like this in the church," revenue from collections that will be taken up at some of the locations, and money from the promotion and education funds of different CRC agencies. The money spent to produce the CD and cassette should be recovered through sales of the music, says VanderMeulen.

Different ways of praising

Darlene Koldenhoven, an accomplished Hollywood singer and "daughter of the CRC," has written, arranged and co-ordinated the musical portions of each rally. The Grammy-award winning singer trained each mass choir and will sing at the performances in each city.

"Through Free To Serve, we learn to understand and accept that there are a lot of ways to praise God, and the more different ways to praise God, the better," says Koldenhoven, who appeared as a nun in Sister Act I and II and has performed for many other movies, including Mission Impossible and Dances

With Wolves. "We're not doing this to say, 'OK, now everybody has to do this kind of music in church on Sundays,'" she adds with a laugh.

For Koldenhoven, agreeing to become involved in the Free To Serve project was another milestone in a career that harkens back to an Easter solo performance of "Low In The Grave He Lay" in a Chicago CRC as a three-year-old. The singer, who now rubs shoulders with top Hollywood actors and directors, grew up in a strict family where movies and rock music were forbidden fruits.

"Movies were a sin. Only religious and classical music, that's all. I missed the whole Beatles thing," laughs Koldenhoven, who now calls herself an "entertainment missionary" in Hollywood.

As for the Free To Serve rallies, Koldenhoven hopes they will show people how to be a salt and light in everyday life. "I'm hoping the people in the audience will be inspired to take action and concentrate on stuff that's positive, that's really God's work," she says.

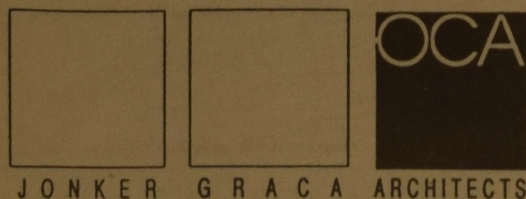
A more positive image

VanderMeulen also hopes CRC members who attend the rallies will be motivated to get

involved in ministry. He says fewer than 20 per cent of Christian Reformed people are actively involved in ministry of some kind: "the others might be good Christians, but they haven't seen the need to jump with both feet into ministry." But VanderMeulen says he'll consider the rallies a success even if nobody is attracted to ministry as a result of them.

"If nothing more happens than that a large number of people leave with hearts full of happiness and a more positive, re-adjusted image of our church, it'll be worthwhile," he says.

The first rally takes place on October 20 at Saddleback Community Church in Mission Viejo, Calif. Other performances will be October 25 at Chicago's Arie Crown Theatre at McCormick Place; two October 27 performances at the Lynden High School in Lynden, Wash.; an October 30 date at Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium in Edmonton, Alta.; two November 2 performances at Redeemer College Auditorium in Ancaster, Ont.; a November 6 rally at Van Andel Arena in Grand Rapids, Mich.; and November 8 and 9 dates at Dordt College's B.J. Haan Auditorium in Sioux Center, Iowa.



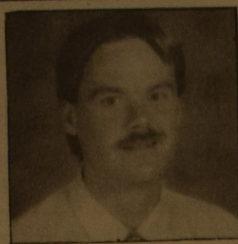
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Sports

What's the score?



Rob Janssens

1996 Olympics a missed opportunity for Toronto and Ontario

Rob Janssens

The 1996 Summer Olympics are now a memory, as the athletes have returned to their native lands, hoping that their respective governments can continue to support them, or that their performances at the games can net them some lucrative product endorsements. The host city, Atlanta, has had to rebound from the infusion of thousands of athletes, journalists and fans and return to its routines again. And while the bombing at the Olympic Park and the well-documented transportation snafus will remain as part of their Olympic experiences, the city will never be the same again because of the benefits of hosting the world.

The question many in the Greater Toronto Area are asking is, "How would Toronto have done as Olympic host?" Don't forget, the city was engaged in an aggressive campaign half a decade ago to be the home of the 1996 Olympics, eventually falling short of the necessary votes of the International Olympic Committee. What lasting advantages would the Games have produced? Would they have been outweighed by high financial and social costs to the city and its poor? Is it part of our cultural mandate to spend public dollars on recreation and entertainment while many go hungry or cold?

Jobs and revenues

First, the benefits. Toronto's public housing problem would have been relieved somewhat by the building of all the accommodations needed to house the athletes (the Olympic Village). After the Games, these units would have been available. Jobs would have been created in the construction industry for the building of the village and the other venues, including another stadium for track and field. A world-class aquatic centre could have drawn international competition (and international consumers) for years to come. Toronto's lakeshore area would have been perfect for the rowing courses.

Not everything would have been built from scratch, of course. The city contains a 50,000 seat domed stadium and a sufficient number of suitable arenas for badminton, wrestling, weightlifting, gymnastics and volleyball. These would have been touched-up for the Games and would have become a magnet for future competitions. Toronto already has a public transit system, a series of major highways and a population base to support the two-week event. A number of neighboring cities could also have held some events.

True, the cost for all these refurbishments and new projects would have been dramatic, but ever since the 1984 Games made a profit in Los Angeles, the "bottom line" has been an issue. Atlanta won the right to the Olympics partly because of its insistence that it would wind up debt-free. The Canadian government would have been foolish not to guarantee some funds (which is a much better idea than Sheila Copps' free-flag boondoggle) in order to promote Canada as the vibrant, cosmopolitan country we think it is. After all, it has sponsored the Calgary Olympics (1988), world fairs, two Commonwealth Games, and a Pan-American games. Surely the precedent has been set for the "mother of all sporting events" (besides the World Series) to deserve a little support.

All would benefit

Private cash would have been huge, though. Television rights alone netted Atlanta \$700 million. And although many scoffed at the commercialization of the Games, it sure beats a load of debt (see Montreal 1976). The loudest critics of the Toronto bid back in 1990 was the "Bread Not Circuses" coalition, which indignantly and self-righteously decried the social woe and decay the Olympics would certainly create, using the Montreal debacle as a case study, even though subsequent Olympics have proven that capitalism beats any other system.

A rising tide raises all boats. Economic and attitudinal boons would have benefited all Ontarians, not just the rich. Canadian governments at all levels and private business should work together to do everything in their collective power to ensure that the next time a Canadian city bids on an Olympics, we don't finish out of the medals.

Rob Janssens teaches Grade 5 at Trinity Christian School, Burlington, Ont.

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Editorial

Prairie farmers are in a struggle against evil, not nature

According to a front-page story in the *Globe and Mail*, "Prairie farmers appear to be winning the race against nature to bring in what could be the most bountiful grain crop in Western Canada's history."

The sentence struck me as odd. Are Prairie farmers in a race against nature? I asked myself. Is "nature" a hostile force that wants to prevent Prairie farmers from getting a good crop? Are we to imagine that natural phenomena like rain and frost are having a daily strategy meeting somewhere in the Rockies to see what they can do to bend those heavy ears of wheat, oats, rye, flax, barley and canola?

I'm uncomfortable with the way the harvesting of grain is being described in this story. But on further reflection, I am somewhat understanding of what the writer was trying to say.

There is no doubt that farmers at times

experience they are up against something that might do them harm. Occasionally that is spoken of as a race against time. But more often it is thought of as a struggle against the weather. There are forces at work in nature that can destroy what promises to be a bumper crop.

But at the same time there are forces at work in nature that *produce* bumper crops. These are typically the gentle types of natural phenomena coming at the appropriate time: sunshine, mild rains and drying breezes when they are needed most. So how can nature as a whole be said to be in a race with farmers, if indeed we can even speak of nature as being an agent that has a will of its own?

Who needs to prove anything?

The problem with this imagery is that by using it we move God out of the picture, as we do so often. And then we start talking about nature either as the source of all life (Mother Nature) or as a violent, uncontrollable force. Jesus' disciples thought that way until the Master showed them that the storm obeyed him. May we never lose sight of that lesson. God is in control of all natural forces.

But picturing harvesting as a race against nature also turns life into an expectation-driven pursuit. As if we are on this earth to be winners. That kind of thinking turns farming from a working faithfully and awaiting the Lord's blessing (*ora et labora*) into a meeting our own or other people's expectations.

The same can be said of expectation-driven church growth, of course. Once the game mentality is well established in our minds, every human pursuit becomes a matter of meeting pre-set goals and of proving something.

Competition can be so selfish

Once we are into the need-to-win mentality, we may even end up thinking that a bumper grain crop is a defeat of other countries where the crops are less abundant. In a world of international trade the idea is almost unescapable. If we have a bumper crop and the United States or China have a poor crop, the price of our grain will go up. Isn't that great? One person's death is the other person's breath.

This may be fashionable thinking in a world that thinks it's important to win, but it is not wholesome, redemptive thinking in a world that needs to answer to its original design and purpose. It's not the kind of thinking that God expects of us, the God who promised that as long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest will never cease.

Soil depletion is a problem

It's true, there are destructive forces at work in the creation. That's because God cursed the ground after the Fall so that growing food crops

would be difficult and disappointing (See Genesis 3:17-19). For prairie farmers some of these difficulties are compounded by the fact that the soil has been depleted of organic matter.

Our friend and columnist Maynard VanderGalien wrote us that if prairie farmers bring in a bumper crop, "it is a miracle from God." He explains that prairie soil has been depleted because no manure or legume crops have been plowed into it to add some structure to the soil, and crop rotation is not feasible because of large acreages. Winds blowing over flat, unprotected fields have caused erosion, and some areas have very little rainfall. "Prairie farmers face far more obstacles in farming the soil than what we think of when we read Genesis 3:17-19," says VanderGalien.

Even a bumper prairie spring wheat crop yields only below 40 bushels an acre, he adds, which is a small yield in the eyes of B.C., Ontario and Quebec farmers, who rotate their crops and yearly improve the soil structure. He explains that corn yields in the Ottawa Valley are excellent this year even though there was very little rainfall. "How did we do it when the summer was dry and cool? The clay soil has lots of organic matter and it gets loads of manure every year.... And we rotate crops."

The conclusion for VanderGalien is that when farmers are good earthkeepers and caretakers, God will bless them at harvest time.

Struggle against evil

When you think about it, good crops are an expression of God's love meant to spur us on to be loving and responsible. There will be a struggle in the life of a farmer as he or she meets the resistance of the curse. And no one should underestimate the vulnerability of people seemingly at the mercy of the weather. But the real struggle and competition that Prairie farmers are called to undertake is against the forces of evil in this world, not the forces of nature. God will take care of the weather. He calls us to be faithful to him in farming and selling.

How can anyone be a farmer and not trust in God? The Contemporary Testimony of the Christian Reformed Church puts it this way: "God directs and bends to his will all that happens in his world.... All things — from crops [emphasis ours] to grades, from jobs to laws — are under his control."

We hope that Canadian Prairie farmers and all farmers in Canada may have good crops, so that their needs are met and they can all the better fulfil God's mandate to be good earthkeepers and caretakers, and to show justice and mercy to the poor of this world.

In fact, we hope that all farmers in the world may be blessed with an abundant harvest.

BW

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Letters

No compromise in choice of marriage partner

It strikes me that the editor of *Christian Courier* wrote his editorial before he read the feature article "Adult singles in the church: What do they want?" None of the six young single adults expressed any frustration with their sexual activity or lack thereof. Yet am I to assume, having read Mr. Witvoet's outlook on sex and the unmarried Christian, that all of these people are participating in either masturbation or fornication to satisfy their sexual desires?

My first response is: why this obsession with the physical act? Sexuality is about what a person is, not what they do. I express myself as a sexual being by much more than what may or may not be happening in my bedroom, and I don't think Mr. Witvoet has any business speculating on what I or any other person, single or not, is doing or not doing to satisfy their sexual desires. By the same token, I have no business speculating what Mr. Witvoet may or may not be doing to satisfy his own sexual desires.

So I'm a little confused as to the point of this editorial. Is the editor of *Christian*

Courier as concerned about the sexual activities of the widows and widowers in our midst?

No other choice

Second, I would like Mr. Witvoet to define for me what is a "suitable but not-yet-perfect" partner? I would prefer to be happy and alone than to compromise in my choice of a marriage partner. I would hope that most parents feel the same way about their single adult children. But having read Mr. Witvoet's editorial, I cringe to think that there might be even one couple contemplating marriage and who, although perhaps not quite sure if they are right for each other, decide upon Mr. Witvoet's advice that it is better to marry than to remain single.

Only a week ago I had a long and intense conversation with a close friend about whether or not my standards for a potential marriage partner were too high. I talked about needing someone who appreciated my sense of independence and my career and academic aspirations. She emphatically said, "What choice do you have?" implying that how could either of us live with ourselves if we settled for someone who wanted us to be less than who we are?

Historical perspective

Finally, as a student of Canadian women's history, I might point out that a little historical perspective on twentieth-century demographics might put some badly needed context to all this talk about the demise of the family unit.

First of all, the average marrying age of both men and women in Canada dropped significantly during the middle part of this century. Whereas the average marrying age of Canadian women was 26 in 1850, it was only 22 in 1950. The fact that people today are waiting longer to marry is not really accurate. A truer perspective would be that people in Canada's post-World War II era married at an earlier age than before.

Secondly, the percentage of people who married also increased during the middle part of this century. For example, in 1931, 29 per cent of men aged 30 to 34 were single, but by 1951, this number had dropped to 20 per cent and by 1971 to 13 per cent. For women, the percentages were 18, 14 and nine, respectively.

As a 32-year-old single professional, I resent being told not to put so much emphasis on career and personal freedom. I am where I am because God has put me here, and I thank him every day for the opportunities he has given me. No one, least of all my parents, have ever pressured me to marry and I know they would not have wanted me to sacrifice my sense of self for a "suitable but not-yet-perfect" partner.

Elizabeth Salomons
Toronto, Ont.

John A. Andrews
Marietta, Oklahoma

Recapture obedience to Scripture

I would like to address several issues that have been dividing the Christian Reformed Church and have drawn much attention in *Christian Courier*. However, to address each issue would be futile — like a dog chasing its tail.

The real issue at stake is not so much allowing women to hold office or accepting homosexual relationships as the authority of Scripture over the church.

Has God really said that women are not to hold office (1 Tim. 2:12)? Has God really said that gay sex is sinful (Lev. 18:22, 1 Cor. 6:9-11)? Has God really said not to eat the fruit from the forbidden tree (Gen. 2:17)?

It is time that we live under the authority of "Scripture alone." It is time for another Reformation, as nothing less than the power and truth of the Gospel is at stake today!

Frank G. Connors
Newmarket, Ont.

CC bucks the trend of humanism

I receive with delight copies of *Christian Courier* from my friend and your subscriber John Nieboer here in Victoria [John Nieboer promotes CC for us. Thank you, John].

Your paper is no stranger to me, having seen and perused it in my parents' home for many years while I was growing up in southern Ontario. But it is only in the last few years of soul reflection that I have come to truly appreciate that CC is a bright spot among the plethora of (small L) liberal, humanistic newspapers, weeklies and magazines that so often (dis)grace our homes and affect our lives.

How bold, how stalwart to buck the trend of liberal-humanism that attempts to sway us all. We need to be reminded

that we walk on paths of moral rights and wrongs, in spiritual shadows, under biblical and heavenly auspices.

Jeff Hoogendoorn
Victoria, B.C.

Reasons for thanks

At this Thanksgiving season we pause to thank God for another year of bounty — including *Christian Courier*.

We appreciated the insightful series "Trouble in the church" by Rev. Bernard De Jonge. The report on Sigmund Brouwer by Jessie Schut was good too.

Hilda Born
Abbotsford, B.C.

Poem

Ain't Dead Yet

My hair is graying, I'm almost blind,
The days of my youth are far behind.
My neck's so stiff, can't turn my head,
Can't hear half that's being said.
My legs are weary, can hardly walk,
But glory be! I sure can talk!
My joints are stiff, won't move in their sockets,
And nary a dime is left in my pockets.
I've arthritis too, it's painful you know,
But I use a vibrator and away I go.
I've got corns on my feet, and ingrown nails,
And do they hurt? Here language fails.
To tell my troubles would take too long,
If I tried, you'd surely give me the gong.
So maybe you think I'm a total wreck,
To tell the truth, I look like heck;
But still I have just loads of fun,
And my heart with joy is overrun.
Now here's the message I want you to get:
I'm still a kickin', I ain't dead yet.
I go to church and the preacher said,
"If you lose your faith, you're really dead!"
So when I reach the end of my row,
I pray to a heavenly home I'll go.
Then when I leave this house of clay,
If you listen close, you'll hear me say,
"Well, folks, I've left you, but don't forget,
I've just passed on,
I AIN'T DEAD YET!"

John A. Andrews
Marietta, Oklahoma

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Christians in Careers



Nandy Heule

On the job with architect Roland Jonker

your local municipality to allow yet another strip mall on the edge of town.

It is the architects who carry liability insurance; they are the prime consultants in a building process and the ones kept responsible when a heavy snowfall makes the roof come down on your custom-built town-house.

Roland Jonker has been an architect since 1965 and started his own firm about seven years ago in Toronto. He got married to Coby Staring and the couple attends Rehoboth Fellowship Christian Reformed Church in Etobicoke where Roland serves as an elder.

"The study of architecture offers the best liberal arts program there is," says Jonker, who has been influenced by the famous American Frank Lloyd Wright and Alvar Aalto, a Finnish architect emphasizing the need for buildings to be "contextual," fitting in time and space.

Fitting the environment

A building also needs to "fit" into God's creation, says Jonker. Especially a large building, like a seniors' home or a church, can symbolize how a community sees itself being part of God's



Roland Jonker at work

world. "Faith has to do with who you are in God's creation and a Christian architect might be able to symbolize how we are collectively in God's creation," says Jonker.

For example, Jonker's firm has been responsible for the building of Holland Christian Homes, a large retirement community in Brampton, Ont., where many residents are from Dutch origins. In its architecture and design Jonker tried to reflect a need to care and share as the people of God. The different apartment towers at Holland Christian Homes are interconnected; hallways are kept shorter than in regular institutional settings; and residents can stop and chat at small greenhouses or seating arrangements along the way.

"There's no such thing as Christian architecture," says Jonker, but faith from within

directs an architect as he or she listens to a client's needs, tries to meet a budget, and wrangles his or her way through a maze of municipal and environmental regulations. In the end, the architect will, it is hoped, design a building that's a reflection of how a community sees itself.

Jonker graduated from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto in 1965 and more recently decided to register as an architect in Ontario and British Columbia. The registration process required him to do a set of exams, much like pastors are examined by church bodies before being ordained.

In his early career days he worked for a large architectural firm and then at an engineering firm before he started OCA with a partner in 1989. His firm employs six staff members and runs a branch office in British Columbia.

*I am the church! You are the church!
We are the church together!...
The church is not a building.
The church is not a steeple.
The church is not a resting place, the church is a people!*
(Copyright Hope Publishing, by Richard Avery and Donald Marsh).

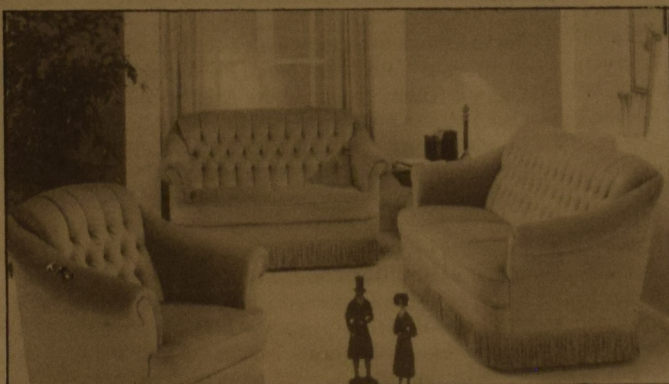
About a decade ago, I had the privilege of worshipping regularly with a new Christian fellowship without a church building. In childlike faith, our group sang enthusiastically that a church building is but a heap of stone and mortar. But like most other Christian communities, as our hearts grew fonder, so did the desire to build a place of our own. That's when our group needed a building committee, fundraising ideas (lots of them), vacant land, and an architectural plan that would reflect the dreams and vision of our community in Christ.

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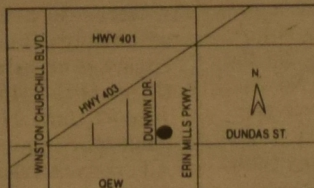
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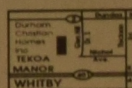


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ARTS & MEDIA

Lesson of love: Ashley Cleveland



Ashley Cleveland deserves her Grammy

Marian Van Til

Produced by Kenny Greenberg. Reunion Records. Distributed in Canada by Nelson/Word. \$18 Cdn.

There is a lot of mainstream Christian contemporary music (CCM) which doesn't use either lyrics or music very creatively. And it's so concerned with "praise" (in what has become the popular evangelical definition of the word) that it doesn't include reflection on the flesh-and-blood struggles that are part of expressing one's faith in all areas of life. Ashley Cleveland is a Christian singer/songwriter to whom those faults don't apply.

While her music isn't difficult in the sense of being esoteric or hard to listen to, it's not "sweet," and definitely not syrupy. It has a bluesy cast that perhaps puts off middle-of-the-road CCM fans. That may be why, so far, real mainstream fame has eluded her. However, Cleveland's three recordings are winning more and more discerning fans in both the Christian and secular markets. And critics are listening: Cleveland won this year's Grammy for Best Rock Gospel album for *Lesson of Love*.

Cleveland has the sultry, achy voice of a white blues singer, and a fair talent as an acoustic

guitar player. (Her husband, Kenny Greenberg, is an ace guitarist, collaborates on some of the writing and produced this CD.)

As a songwriter Cleveland has a nifty ability to turn clichés or common phrases around to make you think again about something you took for granted; and her melodies seem to grow organically out of her lyrics. She's effective singing other people's songs too; and her re-workings of traditional hymns and gospel songs are unique and effective.

Loved hymns, didn't like church

Cleveland was born in Tennessee and grew up mostly in California, in the Presbyterian Church. She says she didn't always like going to church but she loved the hymns. And still does. That's evident in her performing three of them on this CD.

Cleveland's rendition of "Holy, Holy, Holy" is something of a revelation. She slows this venerable "Sanctus" down to a meditative crawl, adds blue notes all over the place and accompanies with only rhythmic strumming on acoustic guitar. After the initial surprise of a very different treatment than one expects, the cumulative effect of the three stanzas is more surprising: a hushed sense of the holiness of God and of the strange

mystery of the Trinity.

The two other hymns here are from the gospel tradition. "Revive Us Again" has been a long-time favorite of the Salvation Army and skid row missions (and it's been parodied in the secular world). Cleveland evokes that down-and-out setting by again drawing from blues: the person asking to be revived is physically and spiritually spent. As the revival takes hold, momentum builds; organ and electric guitar take over. The last stanza pulls back, slightly reflective, then lets loose. The refrains incorporate electric guitar, bass, organ, trumpet, sax and background singers, appropriate to singing: "Hallelujah, thine the glory! Hallelujah! Amen! Hallelujah, thine the glory! Revive us again!"

"[There's] Power in the Blood" offers the world- and sin-weary the key to Life, stated against a moderately slow but very strong beat, also reminiscent of blues. While musical descriptions of these two well-known gospel hymns would sound quite similar, each has a unique sound and feel.

Rain in the desert

The most emotionally moving number here was written by a friend of Cleveland's, Beth Nielsen Chapman, when Chapman's husband was dying of cancer. A simple, affecting tune is wedded with a text which understatedly professes a rock-solid faith that hangs on to God even "in the desert."

Stanza 2 proclaims: "It will rain, it will rain in the desert./In the cracks of the plain there's a treasure./Like the thirst of the seed, we await, we believe/it will rain, it will rain in the desert.")

The song is accompanied primarily by soft piano. A background string obligato joins at whisper-level on stanza 2; a short cello and piano interlude bridges stanzas 2 and 3. Stanza 3 looks toward our separation from this world and to what will be revealed to us "on that side." This simple, hopeful song will elicit powerful emotions especially in those who are close to

someone terminally ill, or who have experienced the death of loved ones.

'You pursue me to the end'

Cleveland's grounding in the congregational and revival songs of Protestantism also informs her own music. (And she seems to have gleaned something of a Reformed worldview from her upbringing in Presbyterianism.) Her well-crafted lyrics have spiritual and emotional depth. The musical form she uses most often is strophic, i.e., has stanzas and a refrain (slightly more variety of musical form, in fact, would serve her well). This stuff is not likely to remind you of hymns, however.

The title song, "Lesson of Love," is a kind of slow dance which reminds me of the style of Canada's Cowboy Junkies. The

Who I Am," a straight-out rock number with a heavy off-beat. It took six months to write, Cleveland told a concert audience in St. Catharines on September 21. She added that "songs take on a life of their own." Perhaps what she meant is that this song turned out to be a very personal statement, saying more about herself and her spiritual life than she might have intended. Yet it's a song of faith which can stir all Christians to assent:

"Scratch and scrape for significance/cut and paste, make your monuments./What a waste when it all caves in.

"I have seen his mark in my fingerprints,/I have felt his spark across the firmament;/and while the world was still dark, I was known by him,/engraved in the palm of his hand.

"I know who I am....

"But I lose my place and I come undone./trying to hold my space, trying to be someone/in the wild goose chase that I run and run./But even in sinking sand...

"I know who I am.... In the presence of the Lamb, I know who I am.

CD performances sometimes don't tell the whole story about a performer. Can a performer — and her music — survive on a



PHOTOS: MARGARET GRIFFOEN-ORIENTH



song's message celebrates the mystery of Christ's call, and love for us: "...Love like this is a mystery to me/Judas' kiss is what I know./But with the passion of a Father/you pursue me to the end,/faithful like no other all my days./Your wings provide me cover while your light invades my sin."

"You Are There" alludes effectively, in rock style, to Psalm 139. "Enter His Courts [With Praise]" is a rock song of praise for God's faithfulness which juxtaposes several illusions to psalms and other Scripture."

The album ends with "I Know

concert stage, minus the studio musicians and electronic enhancement?

In concert, singing with just two (amplified) acoustic guitars played by herself and Kenny Greenberg, Ashley Cleveland not only survives but thrives. You know she and her talent are for real.

Associate editor Marian Van Til has a master's degree in music history, has taught music, K through college, and has been a church musician since age 13. She is currently music director at St. John's Episcopal Church, Youngstown, New York.

Church

'Young People's' meeting reconvened after 40 years



Some of the not-so-young "young people" get into the swing of things.

Ralph De Groot

TORONTO — Saturday, Aug. 31, saw 95 not-so-young "Young People" of the 1950s gather in the First Christian Reformed Church of Toronto for their first reunion ever.

The wonderful park-like grounds and decorated greenhouse facilities of Richview Nurseries, home of Marinus and Sylvia Jansen in Stouffville, Ont. — themselves former

members — was the setting for afternoon registration, socializing and refreshments.

Dinner highlights were the often hilarious selected readings from actual Y.P. minutes. Most people had forgotten that these had been written in highly stylized, formal Dutch. Special note was taken of one topic recorded in 1954: "De vrouw in het ambt" ("Women in office"), followed by a lengthy detailed recording

of the discussion and its conclusion: "Dat er voorlopig geen verandering wordt verlangd of te verwachten is...." (That for the

time being change is neither desired nor expected...).

Sunday morning saw us worship together in First Church, more commonly called the Taunton Road Church. Rev. Ruth Hofman, ordained there but a week earlier, warmly welcomed the "Y.P.s," and extended God's greeting. Toronto Hospital chaplain Mrs. Nell De Boer, former Toronto YP member, delivered the sermon based on Matthew 16:21-28 and Romans 12:9-21. There it was: not only to be one in the Spirit, but also to be aglow with the Spirit in serving our Lord.

Former YP president John Kamerman, now an evangelist at Scarborough church, provided reflections on God's faithfulness. We were read a church bulletin of a Sunday morning in May, 40 years ago, listing the names of 27 young people who would publicly profess their faith in this same sanctuary. Many of those were at the reunion. And when attendees were asked to stand if they had

been married in this church, few remained seated.

In moments of silence and introspection, pastoral names came to the fore: Brondsema, Bos, Rook, Louis Praamsma, De Jager, Kooistra. One almost expected to see the no-longer-used door to the former consistory room open to allow the entry of those early elder and deacon leaders to their designated pews up front, long since removed; among them, in many cases, our own late fathers. What would they say to us today?

And we sang! What a wonderful experience it was to be accompanied by our former YP peers: John Winters on organ, Joanne Overzet (nee Krol) on piano; and Ralph Pypker on trumpet. "Great Is Thy Faithfulness"; "God Be with You Till We Meet Again" — The echo remains with you.

Ralph L. De Groot is a retired RCMP supervisor who lives in Peterborough, Ont.

Former PTL leader Jim Bakker rejects 'prosperity gospel'

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. (EP) — In the 1980s, televangelist Jim Bakker preached that God wanted to show his blessing by giving Christians luxurious houses and fancy cars. Now he's telling audiences that the "prosperity gospel" is Satan's deception.

"I taught people that God wanted above all for you to be rich and have money," Bakker told attendees at the Azusa '96 conference in Tulsa, Oklahoma, earlier this year. "That's a lie. This is why I came back from the grave. God brought me back to teach some of these things."

Scripture out of context

Bakker headed one of the most successful ministry empires in the U.S. before resigning in a scandal in 1987 and being convicted on 24 counts of fraud in 1989. He was sentenced to 45 years in prison, but that sentence was later reduced; he served about five years before being paroled in 1994.

After being convicted by the justice system, Bakker was convicted by God. In prison, God called him to repentance, says Bakker. He is now atoning for

his sins in various ways, including writing a forthcoming book simply titled *I Was Wrong*. Bakker is not likely to make any money from the book because of the great amount of money he still owes the IRS in connection with excesses at PTL.

Bakker readily admits, "I was proof-texting all the time, just looking up in Scripture to prove my beliefs," he said in Tulsa. "The church is in trouble right now because we have taken Scripture out of context and have built our own doctrine. We have another gospel and another Jesus and another spirit being preached... and the church is going to end up in hell."

Richard Dortch, a former Bakker aide who was also convicted in connection with PTL, told *Charisma* magazine that he believes he and Bakker may still be able to have an effective ministry. "God is not a part of our sins. He is not a part of our failures," Dortch said. "The whole story of the Bible is the story of humanity's fall and human failures, and God's forgiveness and restoration. The whole story of Jim's and my case is that what Satan meant

for evil, the time will come in due season that God will reveal how it was meant for good."

Romania makes homosexual relations a crime

BUCHAREST, Romania (EP) — Romania's parliament voted to make homosexuality a crime punishable by jail. The lower house approved a law making homosexual relations punishable by up to three years in prison — five years if the act took place in public. The 174-39 vote creates a stricter standard than that approved by the upper house last March, which would have made homosexuality a crime only when it "causes a public scandal." The two bills will be reconciled and presented to President Ion Iliescu to be signed. The vote is an act of defiance against the European Council, which told Romania it must abandon laws against homosexuality before it would be allowed to join the group of Western parliamentary democracies.

Special Meeting

Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada

The Council of Covenant Christian Reformed Church, Winnipeg, Man., is calling delegates of the 12-member classes to an extraordinary meeting of the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada on November 11 and 12, 1996, in Winnipeg, for the purpose of considering the future structure of the ministries of the Christian Reformed Churches in Canada. Council asks the churches to pray in preparation for this direction-setting meeting.

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Chapter & Verse



Wayne Brouwer
Andrew Kuyvenhoven
★ Laura Smit
Al Wolters

Thankful self-surrender

"Do you thank the slave
for doing what
was commanded?"
(Luke 17:9).

In Jane Austen's novel *Mansfield Park*, the heroine is a young woman named Fanny Price who comes from a poor family but has been raised by wealthy relatives who took her into their home as an act of charity. Fanny is constantly having her obligation to this foster family thrown into her face. When a young man of good fortune but bad character asks to marry her, she refuses him, only to have her uncle accuse her of *ingratitude*. Fanny feels the full force of this accusation. She and her relatives all agree that she is obligated to be grateful for their kindness and that this gratitude is to take the form of surrendering her will to theirs.

Austen does not allow her readers to agree with this assessment, however. With all her characteristic sly humor, she presents Fanny's relatives as some of "those well-meaning people who are always doing mistaken and very disagreeable things." It quickly becomes apparent that the Bertram family has benefited immeasurably from Fanny's presence among them and that if there is to be gratitude expressed it should be from them to her. The repeated insistence that Fanny should be more *grateful* becomes increasingly absurd and distasteful.

No need for extremes

This is especially true, I think, for readers of our era. We have been taught that we are entitled to so much that the idea of gratitude is inherently a limited one for most of us. It is polite to say "thank you" when someone does us a kindness, but there's no need to go to extremes about it. Certainly there is no service anyone could render me which would lead me to believe that I owe that person obedience, submission and the surrender of my will. Let me take you out to dinner, and we'll call it even.

Such an attitude makes it difficult for us to understand the biblical emphasis on being grateful to God. It's easy enough for us to say thanks to God for the various good things in our lives in the same way that we would thank a friend for treating us to dinner. But to genuinely feel that we are so indebted to God as to require the complete surrender of our will to his, to see any self-will on our part as an act of ingratitude, is profoundly unnatural.

Of course I'm grateful, but within reason. I have rights too, after all. It's not as if I haven't ever done anything to be of service back to God. Let's have a Thanksgiving dinner, and we'll call it even.

Only failed obligations

The problem with this feeling, of course, is that God is not some well-meaning uncle "always doing mistaken and very disagreeable things," manipulating us into being obligated to him. God is our Creator, our Lord and our Master, even before he's given us any blessing at all. We have no rights when we stand before him, only failed obligations.

Gratitude does not cut both ways. In the Gospel of Luke, Jesus explains to his disciples:

Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, "Come here at once and take your place at the table"? Would you not rather say to him, "Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink"? Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, "We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!" (Luke 17:7-10).

God owes us nothing, and nothing we can do or say will re-define our relationship with him as one of mutuality and co-dependence.

The wonder is that God our Master actually does the very irrational thing Jesus describes in this brief discourse: he turns to us, his worthless slaves, and says, "Come, take your place at the table. Let me serve you."

'What language shall I borrow...?'

The very next story in Luke 17 is the story of the healing of the 10 lepers, only one of whom bothers to say thanks. Apparently the other nine felt they were entitled to this miracle, that they had received no more than their due. There was no need to do anything so extreme, so undignified, so self-abasing as rushing back to him and prostrating themselves at his feet.

Only the one leper realized that he had not been healed by some well-meaning, avuncular prophet. He had been served by the One to whom he owed all service. As have we. Fall at his feet and give him thanks.

Laura Smit is a pastor in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). She is currently doing doctoral studies in philosophical aesthetics at Boston University, Boston, Mass.

Dutch churches look for new strategies to fund mission work

THE NETHERLANDS (REC) — For the last two years, the income of the mission and diaconal agencies of the two large Reformed churches in the Netherlands has been dropping. The Centre for Mission and World Service of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN) reported a drop of f. 2.5 million (US \$1.47 million) for a total income of f.24 million. The Nederlands Hervormde Kerk (NHK) reported a net drop of f. 2.4 million (\$1.4 million) for its two agencies. In both cases the drop for diaconal work was much larger than the loss for mission work.

Too much suffering

In a recent discussion with *Vandaar*, the joint magazine of the two churches' missions, the three agency heads talked about the reasons for decline. D.C. Nicolai of the NHK's mission council pointed out there was a general despair that anything could be done. There is too much suffering to comprehend. A second factor was the declining economy in Europe. This has led to more local needs. The NHK's diaconal agency, which also serves needs in the Netherlands, reported more demands on church resources coming from the local communities.

Kor Berends of the GKN added that loyalty to the church agencies is also declining. Many churches are donating as much money to parachurch agencies as to the church agencies. In the NHK, 50 per cent of the gifts go to non-church agencies.

Modern life means that promotional methods that still worked a decade ago are now less effective. An evening of

pictures about mission work in India or Ghana does not draw a crowd the way it used to, according to Nicolai.

The NHK has plans to address the problem by creating a department called "Service." The country will be divided into regions, each with its own staff member. They hope to create closer relationships with the congregations, and to become less remote.

The GKN has not yet developed a detailed strategy. Instead it is planning a series of consultations with local churches to see how the churches view the national agency.

In the meantime, the GKN's Centre for Mission and World Service can honor no new requests and has had to drop some of the older work. Both churches' agencies have nearly used up reserve funds and expect further cuts in the next few years.

Potchefstroom U. rules out church activity on campus

POTCHEFSTROOM, South Africa (REC) — No church activity may take place on the campus of Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education. This ruling was made by its governing council recently to "reduce pressure from the government and other religions on the university."

In reaction some 2,500 students marched to the offices of Rector Carolus Reineke. They delivered a memorandum requesting the Christian character of the university be maintained.

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Feature

Revisiting Rouveen: Meeting the Veermans was one of those unplanned blessings

Tymen E. Hofman

My association with Rouveen began in 1975 when I was one of four members of the Christian Reformed Church Interchurch Relations Committee to visit the churches in the Netherlands. John Kromminga, Jake Eppinga and Gerry Bouma were the other members of our delegation.

On a day between meetings we decided to take a short trip to Friesland and other places along the way. That included a visit to Staphorst, that well-known citadel of conservative orthodoxy in the Netherlands, irrespective of denominational loyalty.

We took the narrow road west of the main drag from Zwolle to Meppel, the *Oude Rijksweg*, and were eying the unique farms with reed-roof houses and attached barns when suddenly we noted people repairing a reed roof. That called for a closer look and a picture. We stopped and engaged the farmer in a conversation about his roof. This soon developed into a get acquainted session in which we explained who we were and why we were in the area.

We made acquaintance

So we got to know Jan Veerman and his wife Antje, his neighbor's wife and her very aged father. The women were dressed in traditional costume, distinctly that of Staphorst-Rouveen. The old father was wearing a black Dutch cap and a fancy velvet vest and smoking a beautiful, long-stemmed pipe. We soon had permission to take their pictures.

We learned that Jan was a member of the *Nederlands Hervormde Kerk* of Rouveen which was part of the *Gereformeerde Bond* of the *Nederlands Hervormde Kerk*, i.e., conservative in theology and life-style but loyal to liberal "mother church." Among other things we asked him what he thought of the *Gereformeerde Kerken*, a sister church of the Christian Reformed Church. He was not slow to tell us about those liberal professors who were corrupting the church. He named

them without difficulty. After we had taken pictures of all those present and taken a look at the litter of young pigs just off to the east of the kitchen and the larger hogs in the nearby pens, we went on our way. We promised we'd send pictures.

We became friends

Through the years since 1975 I have visited the Netherlands many times and each time we've tried to squeeze in a visit with Jan Veerman and his wife. That has included all the members of our family, my brother and his wife, and others. So we became friends of the Veermans though we did not correspond. We were not able to visit them when in the Netherlands in 1993 but on this trip with our son Ron and Heidi and the children, we decided to go back to Rouveen.

I hadn't taken their address along, believing that I would be able to recognize their house as I has so many times before. But

driving north on ORW I failed to identify the house. I thought I remembered No. 511 but it was very different than what I had remembered. And no one answered the door bell. So we went a bit farther to ask questions. Yes, they knew of Jan Veerman but he had died a couple of years ago. His wife was still living on the farm. A young lady volunteered to show us the place if we would follow her bicycle. She went right to No. 511.

Overcome by joy

A lady at 511a said that Mevrouw Veerman was out shopping but might soon be back. Indeed, she was. As she stepped out of the car, Cobi and I walked up to greet her. I had a cap on but even when I removed it she seemed not to know me, but she soon recognized Cobi.

When we told her who I was she was speechless. How could that be because she was sure

that I had died. Dominee Bouma had stopped by in 1991 and told them that I had a very bad cancer and likely would not make it. She had been convinced that I

... He was not slow to tell us about those liberal professors who were corrupting the church....

had died and she would never see me again. She was overcome by total surprise and joy.

She told us that Jan had died of cancer in 1994. When he was

still well they had taken a nice tour of Switzerland. They also gave up farming. He had not suffered long. After his death they had completely remodelled the house and removed the connection with the barn. That is why I had not recognized it. The area that was once a fine garden was now a fenced-in pen with several small goats and their kids on display, the hobby of Jan's son and daughter-in-law. They lived in a neat little house where once the hogs had been quartered.

Unplanned blessing

We reminisced about the times we had visited and we remembered others who were no longer with us. She continued to express here amazement that we were able to see each other again. She had tried to correspond with us when Jan died but her letter was returned. She had gotten an address from the pictures we sent in 1975 but had recorded it incorrectly.

As we prepared to leave we found the neighbor lady near our van. She showed us a picture taken of her by Gerry Bouma in 1975, in her costume. It was apparent that she wanted very badly to be involved in our visit so we spent a few moments with her and took more pictures.

The children were having a ball feeding the little goats. One tried to swallow too large a piece of bread, resulting in a lot of coughing and crying by the little goat, and distress on the part of the children who were afraid the little goat would die. By the time we left all was well again.

If ever we return to the Netherlands we hope to see Antje Veerman again. Our relationship with her and her former husband was one of those unplanned blessings that the Lord allows us to enjoy when we make the best of the opportunities that come our way.

Tymen Hofman is a retired Christian Reformed minister who lives in Grand Rapids, Mich.



PHOTO COURTESY TYMEN HOFMAN

From l. to r.: Antje Veerman, Tymen Hofman, Ron Hofman.

Feature

Domestic violence affects children too



Lynn Klammer

"Dad used to be really bad," says Becky. "He would get drunk and hit Mom and me. Until Mom and me left it was pretty bad." Becky is just one of an unknown number of teenagers who live in an abusive home.

When we think of domestic violence we usually think of the wives and mothers who are the victims of their husband's battering. Less often do we remember the children who must survive within these violent homes. Their stories are less often told, and less often remembered by the media when publicizing domestic violence.

Whatever the particular type of abuse suffered, there is a "cycle of violence" that is common to domestic abuse. Most survivors of domestic violence agree that there are three phases to the violence that takes place within their homes.

Generally speaking, there is an initial phase during which the level of tension builds and builds. The family will usually recognize that the abuser is on edge and will try to do whatever they can to please the abuser or stay out of the way.

In phase two, the tension explodes into aggression. The abuser strikes out violently and either physically, or emotionally

and psychologically assaults the family. Even if it is only one member of the family who is hit or verbally injured, the entire family suffers.

"It used to drive me crazy," says 20-year-old Glen, who grew up with an abusive father. "I'd sit on my bed and pray and pray that he wouldn't hurt my mom, but you could just tell it was going to happen. The yelling would get worse and worse and then it would start."

Once the abuse ends, a "hearts and flowers" stage begins. During this third stage the abuser usually says he's sorry and promises to never do it again. This final stage is often one of the reasons that victims will stay in an abusive relationship for so long. The family finally receives the love and affection they want from the abuser. This "cycle of violence" will repeat itself over and over, and without help, is likely to never end.

Few options for kids

Children in a violent home are usually unable to leave unless they can convince their mother to go. Running away from home is usually the only other option,

which may put the person in even more danger. The children often feel trapped and helpless, unable to help themselves or their family.

Some children simply deny what is happening to themselves and their family. "I thought it was normal," says 21-year-old Bob of his lifetime of abuse at the hands of his father. "When we did something wrong, Dad would hit us. I figured maybe he got carried away sometimes, but I figured everyone's dad was that way." Nineteen-year-old Ben suffered numerous broken bones, cuts and bruises at his father's hands, and 18-year-old Shaun remembers the beatings his mother would receive for anything from not having dinner ready on time to wearing the wrong kind of perfume. "Dad would get so mad. We kids would go to our rooms and wait for it to end. I hated living at home. I love my parents, but I hated being with them."

Love for the abuser is a common reason spouses and families give for staying. Women are especially susceptible to believing that they can help the man if they stay with him. Even when the mother sees her children abused she may still feel that it's best to keep her family together and, of course, hopes that one day the abuse will stop. Some-

times work or something outside the family is seen as the cause of the abuse, and the woman hopes that when the job changes, the abuse will stop.

"Mom said Dad just had a lot of trouble at work," remembers 18-year-old Kelsey. "She said when he'd find a better job he wouldn't get so mad anymore; but it didn't matter."

Another common reason given for staying in abusive homes is the lack of alternatives. Many mothers are unable to financially provide for their family if they leave. Many have no job or access to money. The shame of their situation often makes them rather not choose to go to friends or relatives for help.

Also, after years of abuse, many women begin to believe that they are helpless and worthless. They begin to believe that they could never survive without their husbands, and are fearful of trying.

Why doesn't God help

Teenagers who must live with the day-to-day stress, fear and pain of a violent home feel isolated from the rest of the world. Along with these feelings of abandonment often come feelings of frustration about God's

role in their lives. "Why doesn't God help me," is a common question.

Young people are generally encouraged by the church to be loyal to their parents and stay in the family home. Their mother may have been encouraged to "submit to her husband" and be faithful to marriage.

Forgiveness, praying harder and putting it all in God's hands are the kinds of things pastoral people sometimes tell family members, but this kind of advice often leads to feelings of abandonment, not only by people but also by God.

The message that should be received by people in need is that everyone is valuable in the eyes of God and therefore God would not want anyone to be hurt.

Ephesians 5:21 says that you should "submit yourselves to one another, because of your reverence for Christ." It compares this relationship to Christ and the Church. Christ did not harm the church and his message was one of love. Out of reverence and respect to God you must respect yourself and each other enough to not permit abuse to take place. You do not love or help an abuser by allowing the abuse to continue, and allowing yourself to suffer does not bring about any good.

Does your boyfriend have the potential for violence?

People who find themselves married to a violent partner can usually point to many clues that were present while they were dating. Dating is your opportunity to find out if your partner has the potential for violence. Protect yourself from being in a violent marriage by knowing what to look for.

Here are some questions to ask yourself:

1. Did he/she grow up in a violent family?
2. Was he/she abusive in previous relationships?
3. Does he/she abuse drugs/alcohol?
4. Does he/she have difficulty controlling his/her temper?
5. Does he/she blame others for his/her behavior?
6. Is he/she extremely jealous and possessive of you?
7. Is he/she cruel to animals?
8. Are you afraid to tell him/her how you feel?
9. Do you ignore your own values in order to make him/her happy?
10. Is feeling good about yourself dependent upon his/her being happy with you?
11. Do you feel he/she doesn't care about your opinions?
12. Do you feel powerless in the relationship?

Dear Mary,

Permit me to continue last month's discussion on how important it is for believers to share their faith stories as a way of building up the life of a congregation.

It isn't as easy as I made it sound. Many of us were taught from our youth that church was doctrine, creeds, the *Heidelberg Catechism*. We were taught to be suspicious of personal stories ("testimonies") that turned the faith from "objective" into "subjective." And many men were taught to hide their feelings, to stuff them deep down where even they had trouble getting them up again.

The "success" of all that teaching has built barriers to the flowering of community, as we both know so well from personal experience. It's hard to get people to open up about the history of their own faith, the stuff that seems so simple — how, along the road of life, Jesus appeared at key times, to call a halt or to help along, to mourn or to party; how the Holy Spirit shed light on times and events that seemed muddled; how a fellow believer became Jesus in the flesh; how God's miracles in nature and technique pointed the way to what Creation might have been at its best, and will become so at the end of times; how (as you pointed out a few columns ago), in time of deep mourning (and profound joy) one had to be with God's people, for where else could one go.

So we must learn to listen for the faith stories between the lines and behind the actual words. Sometimes the real story is revealed in the way a person's face and hands move, in the speed of language, one's body posture, a key word here and there. The told story may not be the real story at all.

I have an example from my peers, men around 60. As I write this, I have two specific faces before me. Both are successful businessmen; handsome, capable fellows. I've had many conversations with them. Both have had long histories in their current congregations, but both are also disillusioned. So much has happened in the church; so many changes; tensions; a time of ministerial failure; church councils that flounder, are weak, change their minds, abandon all discipline. Both men live on the edge of congregational life and neither is interested in raising issues, not even the ones they are still passionate about. And both (they've told me), often feel that there's little faith left inside — if any.

They seem stuck to me. I've tried to get them interested in some reading of contemporary stuff about the church in the world. If they could only come to recognize the current confusion of old ways of the church disappearing, and new forms appearing, and that it's not the first time in the church's history that this is happening. Aren't we all children of the Reformation, and are they themselves not descendants of 19th century church rebel rousers?

These days, how can we avoid throwing out our babies with bathwater? How do we distinguish between good new ways of being church, and bad ones?

Both men are intelligent. Neither is interested in spending time and energy on reading about the church, however.

You might well ask: Isn't their current condition ample proof that perhaps they've never had much of a faith life, that faith life for them was more than *faith-institution* life? Have they only known church structures, church order, rules?

A fair question. But then I also hear them talk about the times that church was good for them. And then I see them revealing real faith life as they talk about being elders, about caring for people they visited and from which visits they went home with faith aglow and surely beyond question. What I observe is this: while they talk about the ways of the congregation then — predictable, steady ways — they let slip how much they were warmed not by the rules and the ritual, but by the shared faith of believers. The problem is, in my view, that they don't recognize that it wasn't the predictability of the church institution that warmed their hearts but the people, and their own pastoral work with them. They still think it was that church institution. I wish I could get them to recognize that it wasn't, and to build on what really excited them then. I have failed, and it makes me sad.

I'm not saying all my peers are like that. Merely that I sense the same thing in many of my peers, disillusioned often by church and church life now, and having problems sharing faith because they feel there's so little of it left for them these days. If only we could get them to recognize and tell their faith stories.

Does all this ring a bell with you?

Regards,
Adrian.

Two
— over —
60



Dear Adrian

Does all this ring a bell with me? How about a whole carillon of bells? There's a lot to respond to in your letter. I find my thoughts wandering all over the place, but I'll try to focus my reactions.

My first reaction was a "Yes, but..." I had to think about why that was. I am a therapist. I have spent my adult professional life listening to people telling their stories. I have invariably been profoundly moved by them. I know the courage it takes, and I have seen many times the relief and healing that comes as a result of finally telling someone the story. I have a respect for that process that borders on reverence. In the world of therapy there seems to be a renewed recognition of the importance of telling our story as at least the first step (maybe even the only step) in healing. And now the church — our church — is recognizing that too. So why do I hesitate in my Amen to what you're saying?

My problem is not at all with what you are saying. My problem is more with my experience of listening to stories within a church or church-related context. Too often they have been simply complaints about the church or about how the church has treated them; or about how the church used to be better than it is now; or about how much better the church down the street is, and wondering why our church can't be more like them.

I have often had the feeling that some people used the church story as a mask to disguise their real story, perhaps like the men in your example. And in the context of a church group there is often not the freedom, either, to confront or to help the story-teller move beyond the mask to their deeper truth.

I guess I would want to underscore your use of the word "faith" stories in contrast to "church" stories. Perhaps the problem is that for many people the two coincide. There is not enough recognition that while many people could tell the same church story, every person's faith story is unique. God doesn't bring us along in classes, like schools do. God has an infinite variety of ways of dealing with us, and an infinite vocabulary with which to speak to us. God respects our individuality too much to subject us to some kind of mass production line. Seeing and beginning to appreciate that variety in my work and in my own life certainly has deepened my praise.

Which brings me to the other point I would want to emphasize. Telling our faith (or lack of faith) story is important for our own healing and growth, certainly. But it also needs to benefit the community of faith. I think that's what drives me so often to the psalms. The psalmists tell their ancient personal stories of praise, of doubt, of confidence, of despair, of faith, and they are still benefitting the community of faith because their words have been preserved in Scripture for us. Withholding our stories robs the community. Just think how deprived the church would be if David had had a private counselling session with Nathan, written Psalm 51 and then hidden it in a drawer somewhere! Our stories do not need to be sanitized success stories, thank God. Telling our stories honestly blesses the community in ways we can't even imagine, because God does the blessing.

So, yes. Let's tell of our encounters with God's presence, or of our encounters with God's absence. And count on his blessing both tellers and hearers.

Cordially,
Mary.

On Sept. 23, 1933, shortly after he came to power, Adolf Hitler, in his brightly polished knee boots and immaculate military uniform with the swastika armband, climbed to the top of a small hill and began shovelling. The "groundbreaking" ceremony for this construction project, like most things involving "der Führer," was masterfully staged. All the radios in the country carried Hitler's call: "*Fange an!*" German workers — to the job!"

Within one year, 90,000 workers and engineers had begun work on the massive highway construction project that would stimulate automobile production and boost the German economy. Where other countries struggled in the Dirty '30s with unemployment and hardship, nearly a million jobs can be traced to the Hitler initiative to build the Autobahnen and promote the production of the Volkswagen, "the people's car."

I suspect that the glorious success of Hitler's economic strategy gave the German High Command additional incentive to export its brand of socialism across Europe. I think that this bold venture contributed to the onset of the modern "car-age" turning into the *carnage* of World War II. It is striking that another military man, Dwight Eisenhower, started the present interstate highway system in the U.S. when he was president in the 1950s, setting the stage for the car boom there.

A growing addiction

It was 100 years ago that automobiles started to roll off primitive assembly lines on both sides of the Atlantic. Before that, horseless carriages were handmade. Right from the start, cars had their critics as well as their admirers. A century ago one French writer, seeing the smoke belching from early automobiles, predicted that "the petroleum-spirit cab will never be a practical proposition in large towns." People have been coming up with variations on that warning ever since.

Twenty years before Hitler conceived the dream of a car for every German family, Henry Ford in 1913 introduced a moving assembly line which enabled his factory to turn out 250,000 Model T's selling at \$500 each, which gave birth to the world's biggest manufacturing industry.

When I came to Canada in 1951 there were 2.6 billion people on the earth and between

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Bert Hielema

'Mad car disease' has us in its grip

them they had 50 million cars, or one for every 52 people. Now, 45 years later, the totals have risen to 5.6 billion people and 500 million (about 780 million when trucks, buses and motorbikes are counted), at least a tenfold increase. Mass motorization has arrived, accounting for one in 10 jobs in most Western countries, and in Ontario for about one in seven jobs.

There is no doubt that a car is

**It was 100 years
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automobiles
started to roll off
primitive assembly
lines on both
sides of the
Atlantic.**

a special thing and everywhere in the world little Hitlers are bargaining with the five or six global automobile giants to build new factories. Economic forecasters are predicting that in another 30 years or so, when this planet will have an estimated nine or ten billion people, the world's car population will have more than doubled to one billion.

The Car. The world is mad about cars. What is it that makes owning a car so attractive? For many, it is the proof that adulthood has arrived and a sign of emancipation, prosperity and success. The car is a place to retreat to, a partner which will never abandon us, a pet to which we have become attached. It is an object of desire, to be caressed and loved, it is much

more than a mere means of transportation. Many see it as a tamed wild animal that also functions as a sex symbol.

The Car. The world is mad about cars, so mad that the initial blessing has turned into a curse. We refuse to see what cars have done and are doing to our environment. As the number of cars rises and the ensuing congestion traps us into ever increasing traffic jams, the pollution risks are getting worse. During its lifetime, an average car travels some 200,000 km and consumes some 20,000 litres of gasoline. Right now, the world's 500 million vehicles produce some 10 trillion cubic metres of exhausts fumes each year. This amount is expected to double in one generation. Imagine the worst air you have ever breathed in a city street and then make it twice as foul. Still, the world is mad about cars. Madness that denies reality.

No electrifying solution

Madness is a serious disease and Mad Car Disease can be fatal. Of the four horsemen of the car's apocalypse: oil depletion, urban pollution, urban congestion and global warming, is the biggest environmental worry. And people are getting worried.

Well, what is the cure? Is there a cure?

Near San Diego in southern California, the electronic highway is being considered, where cars can be locked into a computer-radar combination, so that at speeds of 120 km per hour they can travel only 50 cm apart. So what else is new, I wonder? Now after 150 years of untold billions expended and millions of lives lost, technology again

invents the train! Just imagine the lawsuits that would result if the radar in one car malfunctioned. No, it seems to me that this sort of experiment is too fraught with uncertainties. But I may be wrong.

How about electric cars? Everybody is experimenting with batteries and so next year GM will release an electric car in California. But electric car technology has a long way to go — especially in cold climates like Canada. The best brains in the world are trying to reinvent the wheel because the present wheels are accelerating downhill without breaks to a certain abyss.

One hundred years after the birth of the motor industry the only radical alternative to travel by car appears to be the information highway: virtual mobility would replace real travel. This means that, instead of driving to stores, we will sit in front of a screen at home and order what we need — groceries, clothing, whatever — via the Internet, with electrically powered trucks delivering the items ordered. True, this will make us prisoners in our own homes, probably procuring a different kind of madness, especially since close to 15 per cent of all jobs in Ontario and 10 per cent elsewhere are directly related to cars, while another 10 per cent and more are in the retail sector, which also would be eliminated.

But that is a later worry. For the time being, we keep on building cars because we are hooked on them. Three quarters of all our car trips are under

eight km. We simply cannot be bothered to walk. Our bikes are rusting in the sheds and the buses never come, so we jump in the car, rev up the engine and speed away.

Self-induced plagues

How does one treat Mad Car Disease? It seemed relatively easy when it concerned cows (for us, not them): we killed them by the millions although only a dozen or so people died from Mad Cow Disease. Car-related fatalities are treated as if they have natural causes, even though worldwide accidental deaths and injuries run into the millions each year. Where is our sense of reality?

As I reflect on the madness which has me in its power, I can only say that the Amish, who have always spurned the advances of the modern motor age, have perhaps made the correct choice. I often wonder what the bible really means when, in Rev. 18:4, a voice from heaven calls unto all believers:

Come out of her, my people, so that you will not share in her sins, so that you will not receive any of her plagues, for her sins are piled up to heaven.

Does this mean that the plagues, evident in the form of global warming and ozone depletion, and both occurring in the heaven above us, are caused by our Mad Car Disease?

Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ont., five km north of the nearest store and five km south of the nearest bus stop. If he really wanted to he could do without a car, but....

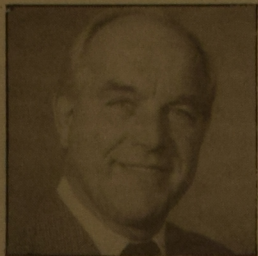


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Church press quotes



Rev. Jacob Kuntz

Our prison system

The cover story in the September issue of The United Church Observer was on our prison system. Author Patricia Clarke asserts that "locking people up and throwing away the key just doesn't work. Encourage prisoners to develop a talent, acquire skills, build self-esteem, and then maybe the time behind bars will have been well-spent." She adds: "Our prisons are a crime." Those who have seen the inside of a prison will tend to agree.

In her "Observations" Muriel Duncan, the editor, makes a few remarks relating to the same issue, saying basically the same thing: "Until 'we' understand who 'they' are, justice will not be done in our prisons." She writes:

"As Patricia Clarke points out in her cover story, the current prison system isn't working. Not for the prisoners, not for the victims of crime, not for society.

"It isn't something you correct with more prisons or harder time. This requires a complete transforming of the way we have sought justice. It means looking seriously at who we send to prison and what effect poverty has.

"Despite tough-on-crime politicians and the fear they feed on, this is exactly the right time for reform of the corrections and justice system.

"There are alternatives. Clarke writes about restorative justice, which could replace the current adversarial justice system with sentencing that takes into account the needs of both the victims and the offenders.

"Those who have wronged people, broken society's relationships, have to accept responsibility and, where possible, repair the damage. Victims need to have the harm done to them

named, to see repentance and have a part in the decision-making about the consequences.

"This kind of change wouldn't come easily. It depends on community involvement, on all of us. Through the ecumenical Church Council on Justice and Corrections (CCJC), we have access to resources to start study groups, letter writing to politicians, remembering Jesus said that visiting prisoners was like visiting him ('What you do for the least of these, you do for me'). We could take part in Restorative Justice Week, Nov. 17-23, with its call for dignity and healing for all: victims and prisoners.

"But first we should look at our own perceptions, the 'wealthy' division that lies at our core, that lets us turn away from our prisons and the people inside them. Maybe if we consider what we have in common with offenders, we'll be able to understand where and why our paths separated."

'Old Order' and 'New Order'

A few times we have, in this column, quoted passages from articles in Mennonite Reporter dealing with Old Order Mennonites. But in the Mennonite Brethren Herald of August 30 Dr. John Redekop writes, tongue in cheek, about "New Order Mennonites," a modern brand of Mennonites whose emphases "seem to parallel rather closely those of the Old Order Mennonites." He is not very happy with what he sees among these New Order Mennonites and says that "their preoccupation with dress code, externalities and legalism has already left me with some important, unanswered questions."

We quote the following passages. Do we not see the same trends in other communions?

"One central trait of New Order Mennonites is a narrow and legalistic dress code. Under no conditions should the preacher or worship leader or member of a 'praise' group wear both a tie and jacket. Well, [under] almost no conditions. If many other Christians are present, compromise may be tolerated. But if New Order Mennonites are in charge, deviance from the group norm is not acceptable. Deviants are pressured to conform. God, it seems, prefers shirtsleeves. Freedom in Christ has its limits.

"It's strange how, in the name of supposedly being more open, contemporary and tolerant, some New Order Mennonites have, in fact, become the most intolerant. Only in some New Order worship and praise settings is one in danger of being ridiculed because of dress, as I have been, or [of] having one's garments mutilated. Certainly I have never

heard of such words and actions in any other Mennonite Brethren setting.

"Additional similarities to the Old Order mindset deserve mention. While many Old Order groups adamantly object to the presence of any musical instrument, virtually all New Order Mennonites, it seems, object just as adamantly to the presence of an organ. There is often insistence that the offending instrument must be physically removed.

"While most Old Order Mennonites apparently object to the singing of new songs, most New Order Mennonites object to the singing of traditional songs. And where the Old Order tend to sing all 10 or more verses of a song, the New Order seemingly like to repeat the one verse almost that many times. (Incidentally, I have yet to figure out how the band members in a New Order worship service know when to stop

playing.)

"Also, while the Old Order sing only from traditional hymnbooks, the New Order generally disparage all hymnbooks, preferring to sing off the wall or screen. I have heard more than a few New Order platform leaders make light of hymnbooks. Both the Old and New adamantly assert the rightness of their rigid views.

"While the Old Order make much of the traditional wooden church pulpit and make it the centre of virtually all worship activity, the New Order generally object to the presence of any wooden pulpit. Apparently a see-through pulpit or, better still, nothing at all separating the platform people from the worshippers makes for better worship. The actual assumption is not as significant as the often dogmatic insistence on this point.

Christian fundraising?

Doug Koop, the (new) editor of ChristianWeek, writes in the August 20 issue about fundraising efforts with "mixed motives and dubious methods." He mentions the case of an international childcare organization that, through a broker, asks "sponsors" to pay \$30 per month and also offers them "long-term income opportunities" in the process (by signing up more sponsors). "Save children's lives and earn an income." A brochure from the organization explains that 25 per cent of the child sponsorship money actually is used for child support; over 50 per cent is "paid out to American families as referral bonuses, encouraging more sponsorships."

The editor is rightly concerned "when appeals to greed are sanctified as holy Christian service." He concludes by saying:

"The bottom line of positive results is not what earns God's favor. Motive — the intent of the heart — matters more. It is entirely possible to do good things for reasons that are less than holy. Indeed, the human tendency to justify such activity by an appeal to 'the bottom line' has a long and ignoble history. [He then mentions the example of King Saul in 1 Sam. 15:15,21. God refused to accept Saul's rationalizing and rejected him as king of Israel.]

"On a thoroughly secular level, investors and donors need to exercise sound judgment. Caveat emptor; buyer, beware.

"Fundraising programs operating on principles similar to the one described above are forever making the rounds, and apparently always finding new takers. Not many investors actually receive the kind of monetary returns that the brochures paint as possible, although a few will come out ahead. These 'pyramid' or 'matrixing' systems depend on the efforts of many people at the lower levels who end up giving more than they receive. Donors whose primary interest is to help needy children should give directly to the sponsoring organization of their choice, if

only because more of their money is directed to that end.

"And Christians need to be especially cautious about how much they allow material interests to shape their spiritual service. Those who become accustomed to doing good things for profit undermine their ability to do them simply because they should. In the end, God honors willing, joy-filled and obedient service, not healthy bank accounts."

Jacob Kuntz is a Christian Reformed pastor who lives in Brampton, Ont., where he serves half-time as chaplain for Holland Christian Homes.



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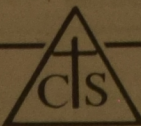
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If you wish a photo included, send us the original. d) <i>Christian Courier</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements. e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to five column inches. <i>Christian Courier</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$15.00 per column inch (GST incl.). NEWLYWEDS & NEW PARENTS We offer a one-year subscription for only \$25.00 (GST incl.) to the couples whose wedding is announced in the <i>Christian Courier</i> and to the parents of the child whose birth announcement appears in our paper. To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request the wedding or birth announcement to enclose \$25.00 and the couple's correct address. Christian Courier 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (905) 682-8311 Fax: (905) 682-8313	VERDONK: We praise and thank the Lord for our 50th wedding anniversary celebration. His goodness has no end. To all our children, grandchildren and Immanuel church members we wish to express a great thank you for all the tokens of love in flowers, cards, etc. It has been an unforgettable blessed event. Teun and Adrie Verdonk. Births AUKEMA: Ed and Teresa welcome with love a son. Our gift from God arrived Sept. 10, 1996, weighing 7 lbs., 13 oz. DAVID JOSEPH GERARD is grandchild number one for Joe and Anne Hofstede and number five for Katie (and the late George) Aukema. Great-grandparents for the seventh time are Jack and Adriana deWit, number nine for Klaas and Tina Kamminga, and number six for Jenny Hofstede. Address: Ed and Teresa Aukema, R.R. #1, Shelburne, ON L0N 1S5 VAN DER MEULEN - VAN EGMOND: "....treat one another with gentleness and respect." We, Peter and Joyce, rejoice and praise God, the giver of all life, for the gift of our fifth child, PETER CORNELIUS VAN EGMOND VAN DER MEULEN born at home on Sept. 25, 1996, weighing 9 lbs., 15 1/2 oz. Peter is eagerly welcomed by Joya, John, Mark and Ellen. Rejoicing with us are proud grandparents Cornelius and Tina Van Egmond of Brampton, Ont., and Charles and Margaret van der Meulen of Cambridge, Ont. Happy great-grandmothers are Mrs. J. Van Egmond of the Netherlands and Mrs. P. Booy of Aylmer, Ont. Address: R.R. #2 (923 Centre Rd.), Hamilton, ON L8N 2Z7 BRINKMAN: With joy and thanksgiving, John and Annette Brinkman acknowledge God's precious gift of life in the birth of BENJAMIN ISAAC GRANTON Born July 30, 1996. Brother to Hannah. Eighth grandchild to Keith and Grace Brinkman of Peterborough, Ont., 16th grandchild to Egbert and Jean Couperus of Belleville, Ont., and kindred spirit to Zachary Thomas Granton Schenk of Richmond, Ont. For Rent For Rent: Mobile home in Palmetto, Fl. Nice clean park. For Nov.-Dec. \$575 U.S. a month. For Jan.-May \$675 U.S. a month. Utilities incl. Call (519) 245-0809.	1956 October 20 1996 With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents BOB and GERRY FEDDEMA "Delight yourself in the Lord and he will give you the desires of your heart" (Ps.37:4). With love from your family, Maryann & Doug Hathaway — Clinton Beverley, Nathan, Tanya, Dora, Scott Doreen & Dave Charron — Trenton Ryan, Michelle, Daniel George & Irene Feddema — Kitchener Jeffrey, Joshua Helen & Frank Smeding — Kitchener Shirley & Al Lindsey — Kitchener Kathleen, ? Kim & Kirk Brumwell — Kitchener Andrew, Stephanie Tammy & Gary Van Amhem — London You are invited to join us in celebrating this occasion at an open house on Saturday, Oct. 19, 1996, the Lord willing, from 2-4 p.m., at the East Strathroy Chr. Ref. Church. Your presence is our gift! Home address: 112 Metcalfe St. E., Strathroy, ON N7G 1P3 Leidsendam Guelph the Neth. Ont. October 25, 1946 JAN and HILDA PRANGER Together with our children, grandchildren, relatives and friends we hope to celebrate God's goodness and grace on the occasion of our 50th wedding anniversary. We pray and trust that our heavenly Father will continue to guide us and keep us in His loving care. Jan and Hilda Pranger 306-93 Westwood Rd. Guelph, ON N1H 7J7 Happy 40th anniversary! Renfrew London 1956 October 5 1996 With praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, we celebrated the 40th anniversary of our parents BOB and EVA SCHINKEL (nee HUIBERS) May God bless them with many more years and be near to them always. With love, Paul & Sharon Schinkel — Calgary, Alta. Jesse, Shane, Trevor, Jordan Roy & Grace Schinkel — Dorchester, Ont. Shawn, Aveleen, Dayna, Cody Bryan & Joanne Schinkel — London, Ont. Nicole Mary-Lynn McConnell-Schinkel — London, Ont. Christine, Tyler Dave & Sheryl Roberts — Calgary, Alta. Home address: 366 Avondale Rd., London, ON N5W 5B5	 <i>Congratulations to Johan and Johanna Schweitzer (nee Lanting) on the occasion of their 60th wedding anniversary!</i> Bolsward Thetis Island 1946 1996 With gratitude we celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents HARRY and JENNY RINGMA They were engaged on Oct. 11, 1942, and married on Oct. 23, 1946. As their children we are thankful for their love of God, their love for the world, their love for each other and their love for us. Nick & Margaret Ringma — Langley, B.C. Grace & Siebe DeJong — Surrey, B.C. Rick & Sharon Ringma — Nanaimo, B.C. Address: Bella Vista Rd., Thetis Island, BC V0R 2Y0 1956 September 27 1996 We wish to honor with thanksgiving and joy the 40th wedding anniversary of our mom, dad, oma and grampa GEORGE and KOOS VISSER (nee KRANS) With love from your family: Ellen Visser — Banff, Alta. Andrew & Karen Visser — London, Ont. Celeste, Nicole, Matthew, Nathan Fiona & Marc Hein — Saranac, Mich. Nicholas Leonard Visser — Samia, Ont. Christy Visser — Castlegar, B.C. Address: #801-1285 Sandy Lane, Samia, ON N7V 4J7	1936 October 21 1996 Edmonton, Alberta With thankfulness and joy we wish to announce and celebrate the 60th wedding anniversary of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents JOHAN and JOHANNA SCHWEITZER (nee LANTING) "I lift up my eyes to the hills. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord the Maker of heaven and earth" (Ps.121). May the Lord continue to bless you and keep you in the years ahead. Congratulations! We love you! Your children, grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren. Alice & Morris Greidanus Jolie & Jim, Nelson & Nancy, John Jane & Bill Verveda Jeanette & Don, Clarence & Trish, Bea & Peter, Winny & Dave, William, Kevin Tony & Clara Schweitzer Michelle & Dan, Laura & John, Lisa, James Ralph & Joanne Schweitzer Kim & George, Denise & John, Marilyn, Melissa Edith & Ed De Haan Carolyn, Wes, David, Darryl Marja & Peter Slofstra Christy, Rachel An open house will be held, D.V., on Saturday, Oct. 19, 1996, from 2-4 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall of the West End CRC, Edmonton, Alta. Best wishes only, please. Home address: 10041-149 St., Summit Village, Suite 217, Edmonton, AB T5P 4V7
Marriages STREEFKERK/HENDERSON: John and Tanny Streefkerk are happy to announce the marriage of their son DEREK JOHN to NATALIE ANNE HENDERSON daughter of the Rev. Paul and Mrs. Shirley Henderson. The wedding will take place, D.V., on Saturday, Oct. 5, 1996, at 2 p.m., in the Independent Assemblies of God Church, Smith Falls, Ont. Derek and Natalie's address will be: 360 Torrance Street, Apt. 809, Burlington, ON L7R 2R9			For Rent CLINTON, ONTARIO ADULT LIFE LEASE RESIDENCES available, 936 sq.ft. to 1235 sq.ft. Fully wheelchair accessible, sprinkler system, central air, security throughout building. Dutch and English spoken. For more info. call (519) 482-9454 or (519) 482-7862.	For Rent For Rent: Mobile home close to Bradenton, Fl. Available Dec. 7-Jan. 11 and Feb. 15-March 22. Call (905) 459-3913. After Oct. 15 please call (941) 722-9137.

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Obituaries	Obituaries	Obituaries	Miscellaneous	Vacations
Drachten, Fr. Thiers, France Dec. 3, 1926 - Sept. 2, 1996 We are grateful for the life of HORACE S. BAKER who will always live in our hearts. After a happy marriage of 42 years, I am shocked and so saddened by the massive heart attack which my dear husband suffered while vacationing together in France. Our wedding text, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall lack nothing," has sustained me during these most difficult days. We grieve his death, although not without hope in the resurrection. Horace is survived by his wife, Janice (Greidanus) Baker, Samia, Ont. Also surviving are four dear children and their families: Stan & Bernice Baker — Oshawa, Ont. Seth, Ava, Jared, Philip Sandra & Martin Mobach — Lacombe, Alta. Janina, Theo, Elaine Norman & Melanie Baker — Ingersoll, Ont. Ryan, Angela Sarita & Gerry Fournier — Vancouver, Ont. Isabelle Funeral service was held at Redeemer Chr. Ref. Church in Sarnia, Ont., on Sept. 9, 1996, Rev. Neil de Koning officiating. We are comforted by our certain knowledge that Horace, by grace through faith in Christ, is home with the Lord. <i>Because He lives, I can face tomorrow</i> <i>Because He lives, all fear is gone</i> <i>Because I know He holds the future</i> <i>And life is worth the living just because He lives.</i> Correspondence address: Mrs. Janice Baker, 1732 Rutherglen Close, Samia, ON N7S 3R9	Eernewoude, Fr. Chesterville, Ont. Jan. 8, 1908 - Aug. 27, 1996 Suddenly, on Aug. 27, 1996, our dear father, grandfather and great-grandfather SYBREN DEJONG went to be with his Lord and Savior. He was predeceased by his wife, Baukje DeGraaf in August 1995, and by his first wife Trijntje Steenbeek in October 1944. Much respected and loved by Willem & Jayne DeJong Piebe & Maryke DeJong Rudy & Jane DeJong and by his 12 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Survived by brothers, Cornelius, Ralph, Stuart, and Abram, in Canada and by sisters Jitske and Hinke, in the Netherlands. Predeceased by brothers Piebe, Fokke, and Bindert, and by sister Hiltje. Also predeceased by son, Johannes, and infant daughter Lutske. "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Ps.91:1). Correspondence address: Mrs. Maryke DeJong, R.R. 1, Chester-ville, ON K0C 1H0	Enumatil, Gr. Clinton, Ont. April 2, 1905 - Aug. 15, 1996 On Thursday, Aug. 15, 1996, SYKE (SYA) SJAARDA (nee POORTINGA) passed away in Huronview, Clinton, Ont. Hebrews 13:5. She was the loved wife of the late Tjeerd (Ted) Sjaarda for 52 years (1930-1982). She is survived by her children: Kenneth & Lucille Sjaarda — Chatham Jeanne & Brian Baker — Bayfield Margi & Allan Kielstra — St. Catharines George Sjaarda — Gowanstown Betty & Frank Thompson — Bayfield Harry & Marilyn Sjaarda — Goderich Janet & Gerrit Sheeres — Grand Rapids, Mich. and one brother Jacob Poortinga, Lynden, Wash. 26 grandchildren and 38 great-grandchildren. Predeceased by one grandson, Terry Kielstra, and one daughter-in-law Minnie Sjaarda. Correspondence address: Jeanne Baker, R.R. #2, Bayfield, ON N0M 1G0	When you fax your display or classified ads to us (particularly obituaries), please type them and check spelling BEFORE you transmit the text.	GOING TO HOLLAND FOR VACATION? Why not rent a VACATION APARTMENT and visit family and sight-see at your leisure. CENTRALLY LOCATED near APELDOORN. Year-round accommodations. FOR BROCHURE OR MORE INFORMATION CALL Harold or Nellie at (905) 985-7891 or fax us at (905) 985-0195.
Franeke Rotterdam "The Lord is my Shepherd" (Ps.23). On Sept. 10, 1996, God took into glory, our dear mother and oma BERTHA KRUYS-VAN DER LOON in her 90th year. We fondly remember her many visits with us. Her children: Annie & Hans Snock — Orono, Ont. Henny & Arie VanderSpruit — Bow Island, Alta. Gerard & Shirley Kruys — Jenison, Mich. Tinie & Rienk Feddema — Bowmanville, Ont. Willy & Laurens Bastiaans — Capelle a/d IJssel, the Neth. Joop & Maartje Kruys — Rotterdam, the Neth. 25 grandchildren and 56 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild. The funeral service was held on Monday, Sept. 16, 1996, in Rotterdam. Burial followed in Franeke. Correspondence address: Mrs. T. Feddema, 68 Prospect St., Bowmanville, ON L1C 3H2	<i>I know that my Redeemer liveth!</i> With sadness and thanksgiving for her life we announce the passing away on Sept. 20, 1996, of our dear mem, Beppe and great-Beppe ANTJE (ANN) DYKSTRA (nee POSTMA) at the age of 85 years. Predeceased by her husband Uilke in 1981. She leaves to mourn her loving children: Doreen & Murray Siertsema — Blyth Mike & Helen Dykstra — Clinton Kees & Sandra Dykstra — Clinton Leo & Francine Dykstra — Thomson Lois & Bill van Reenen — Seaforth Alfred & Margaret Dykstra — Clinton Margaret & Murray Klaas — Burlington Bert & Nellie Dykstra — Clinton Tom & Diane Dykstra — Moorefield She will also be missed by 39 grandchildren and 34 great-grandchildren. Her optimism and joy in the Lord was a source of encouragement and strength to us. The funeral service was held in the Clinton Chr. Ref. Church, Clinton, Ont. Rev. J. Quartel officiated and spoke words of comfort from Psalm 73:24,25. Correspondence address: M. Siertsema, Box 368, Blyth, ON N0M 1H0	Church News Christian Reformed Church New worship times: — Calvin CRC, Ottawa, Ont., now worships at 10:30 a.m. instead of 10 a.m. The evening service remains at 6:30 p.m. Calls accepted: — to Calvary, Ottawa, Rev. Nicolaas Cornelisse of Maranatha, Edmonton. Admission to the ministry, as evangelist: — On Sept. 20, 1996, Classis B.C. South-East, with the concurring advice of the synodical deputies, has admitted Herb deRuyter and Peter Janssens to the ministry of the Word in the Christian Reformed Church. Herb and Peter will work together in team ministry at the First Chr. Ref. Church of Chilliwack, B.C. Classis B.C. South-East also examined Sid VanderWoud and approved his ordination as an evangelist to serve in ministry at the Hope Community Chr. Ref. Church in Surrey, B.C. It is our prayer and trust that the Lord will richly bless Herb, Peter, Sid, their families and the congregations they will serve. May you always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord and know that labor in the Lord is not in vain. Gerrit J. Veeneman, Stated Clerk Classis B.C. South-East	 GIANT BAZAAR Trinity Christian School, located 650 Walkers Line (South of Fairview), Burlington, Ont., will again be holding its annual GIANT BAZAAR on Saturday, Oct. 26, 1996. The doors will open at 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., followed by an auction starting at 6 p.m. The day will offer many exciting events, including a bake room, craft room, lunch room, silent auction throughout the day, children's crafts, magicians, white elephant room, produce room, hair cuts and more. There will also be clowns with balloons, candy floss, and ice cream for the children. This exciting day will have something for everyone. We hope to see you there! For information call (905) 332-3886.	DEDICATION SERVICE The Beth-El Chr. Ref. Church of Acton, Ont., is pleased to announce the completion of their new building addition. Praise the Lord! A dedication service will be held Oct. 27, 1996, at 3 p.m., with an open house and light dinner to follow. All welcome!
	Send your questions to Peter and Marja. Confidentiality is assured.		Job Opportunities Calgary Christian School seeks a SECONDARY PRINCIPAL Calgary Christian School (CCS) is a well-established, inter-denominational school with 635 students in grades K-12. A Secondary Principal is required to direct and oversee the operations of the secondary campus with a staff of 20 and approximately 225 students in grades 8-12. The Principal must be able to articulate a sound vision of Christian education and be committed to working as a member of an administrative team. CCS seeks a principal with training and experience in Christian educational leadership and excellent communication and interpersonal skills. The successful candidate must be qualified for Alberta Teaching Certification. Application deadline is November 22, 1996. Please send resume, a statement of your vision of Christian education and leadership, and references to: Mr. J. Lindemulder, Chairperson of the Board Calgary Christian School, 2839-49 Street S.W. Calgary, AB T3E 3X9 Phone: (403) 242-2896 Fax: (403) 242-6682	

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Personal	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Events
ONE TO ANOTHER Christian companion magazine. Hundreds of readers Canada-wide. Single issue \$5. Write to: #302, 1502-2nd Ave. S. Lethbridge, AB T1J 4A2 For Sale	931026 Ontario Limited — We are a new company with a patented environmental product in storm water management and pollution control suitable for municipalities and developers. Our team requires: Sales and Marketing Representative(s) Who is our preferred Candidate? Candidates who: have progressive proven sales experience, have experience in development, civil engineering, sewer construction, are self starters, have marketing training, who are willing to travel and meet people, will be usually high on our list. We look at all resumes we receive. Who should be interested? Do you have many of our preferred characteristics? Are you looking for a shorter term opportunity? Do you need a position with possibilities for flexible time? Are you looking for a challenging position from the ground floor up? If so contact us. Salary: This is a commission position(s). Apply today! Send a resume and contact details. We will review your resume and acknowledge receipt of the resume. 931026 Ontario Limited Acton, Ontario, Canada Fax: (519) 853-4795 Eml: jvegmnd@aztec-net.com Attention: President	Welcome to the Second Annual Arts & Crafts Jubilee Saturday, October 26, 1996 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Jubilee Fellowship Church 13 Wilholme Drive, St. Catharines, Ont. (near First Street and Third Avenue) (905) 687-3372 Crafters wanted. For further information call (905) 687-3372 Parking free. Admission \$1.00 Coffee, desserts and lunch available.	For Sale After many requests, available again: "OPA DEKKER IN CANADA" (Dutch) The simple, computer-printed book that made hundreds laugh and cry. Large print. Excellent gift for overseas family. Order before November 1, 1996: Send \$12.00 to: Herman de Jong, 4414 Jordan Rd., Jordan Station, ON L0R 1S0
THE MUSIC GROUP Willem Van Suydam General Manager 5205 Harvester Rd., Unit 2, Burlington, ON L7L 6B5 1-800-376-7199	Miscellaneous		

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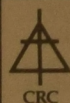
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Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Job Opportunities	Events
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SEEKING A PASTOR Horizon Community Church, a new CRC ministry of 100 families, is seeking a pastor. The church is located in the thriving suburban community of Highlands Ranch, a part of the Denver Metropolitan area. Key to the church's program is Bible-based dynamic preaching, enthusiastic worship, and sharing of the gospel in active outreach to a suburban community. Essential to the church's development is continued facilitation of the merging of two congregations and leadership for staff ministry. Please send inquiries and/or resumes to the Search Committee, Horizon Community Church, 7140 S. Colorado Blvd., Littleton, CO 80122.	  Toronto 416-224-5211 Toll-Free (Canada wide) 1-800-667-2525 Fax 416-224-0842 Grimsby 905-945-3301 Burlington 905-522-8602 <i>Emergency Service Available</i> Business & Vacation Travel	 King's Terrace <i>A Creative Adult Christian Community</i> • Custom designed for comfort and easy living • Spacious 2-bedroom and 2-bedroom plus den suites • Conveniently located near Steeles Avenue West and McLaughlin Road in Brampton • Your investment grows as property values increase • Sponsored by King's Knoll Non-Profit Homes Act Now to Reserve the Suite of Your Choice Information meeting: Sat. Oct. 26, 1996, at 2 p.m. Second Chr. Ref. Church, 444 Steeles Ave. W., Brampton, Ont. For information or to arrange a viewing appointment call: Pauline Schuringa at (905) 457-6715 201 County Court Blvd., Suite 500, Brampton, ON L6W 4L2 <i>King's Terrace is a Salem Affiliate</i>	
Bulkley Valley Chr. School, Smithers, B.C. With our present principal retiring, we invite qualified people to apply for the position of SECONDARY PRINCIPAL starting the 1997/98 school year. Please send resumes and enquiries as soon as possible (deadline: December 20, 1996) to: Principal Search Committee c/o Mr. Ed Adema Site 37, Comp. 8, R.R. #1 Smithers, BC V0J 2N0 Home phone: (604) 847-3080 Business phone: (604) 847-3981 Fax: (604) 847-4799	The Fourth Annual Hugh and Eve Meeter Calvinism Awards for High School Seniors Awards are given annually for research papers on the topics selected by the Calvinism Committee. The 1997 topic: John Calvin's Views on God's Law and the Magistrate in Creating the Good Society 1st Prize: \$2,500 • 2nd Prize: \$1,250 Awards are payable to student tuition accounts at one of the colleges approved for offerings by the CRC Synod including: Calvin, Dordt, King's, Redeemer, Reformed Bible College, and Trinity Christian.. For research paper guidelines and further information, request the Meeter Award Brochure* from: The H. Henry Meeter Center for Calvin Studies, Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary, 3201 Burton SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 USA • 616-957-7081 <i>*Brochures have also been sent to high schools associated with Christian Schools International.</i> Deadline for completed papers: January 15, 1997.		

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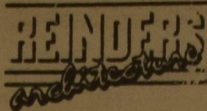
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News

Centre offers support and information to demoralized youth

Maria Stam

LONDON, Ont. — The Youth Action Centre in town addresses the needs of young persons loosely referred to as "youth at risk." Some of these are on the street because they're involved in serious conflicts with their families or the law. Some of them are unemployed or have dropped out of school.

These youth, varying in age from 16 to 24, find in the centre's casual atmosphere a staff willing to listen to their stories and help them deal with their frustrations.

They receive essential information and encouragement in a variety of ways. A public nurse visits regularly to instruct about personal hygiene, nutrition, sexuality, teenage pregnancies and AIDS. Invited professionals give talks and lead discussions on topics of interest to this age group.

Linda Carmichael, the centre's social worker and co-ordinator, says she encounters a lot of depression and hopelessness among street youth coming to the centre.

"We are trying to advocate self-empowerment, because we believe that through training and support their self-esteem will be raised, which will give them the strength to accept responsibility for their own actions," she says.

"We encourage regular callers to become involved in the different activities of the centre, like cooking and serving a common meal each Monday evening and participating in an evening of crafts on Wednesdays. It's beneficial for them to work together with their peers and have a possibility to express themselves creatively," says Carmichael.

The centre's staff is assisted by post-secondary students on



PHOTO: MARIA STAM

A casual atmosphere prevails.

internship programs. Now in its third year, the centre can already look back to quite a number of success stories of young persons it helped into jobs or to get back into schools and training

programs. However, recent governmental cutbacks and the extremely high unemployment figure of more than 15 per cent for this age group in Ontario make it much harder for teenagers to return to school or enter social programs.

influence on the young people by sharing their life-experiences with them. Their involvement can be a welcome opportunity to break down barriers between the older generation of London and the street youth, who for the most part come from dysfunctional families and have little or no contact with their relatives. They often lack elder role-models since they didn't grow up with traditions and family values. As most seniors have experienced times of limited resources during their lives and learned to cope with less, they are able to show the young generation how to become more resourceful and to budget with greater care.

'Lifted' by 11 churches

Financial help for the centre is partly provided by the city of London. This is the only youth program in London supported by municipal funds. Other assistance comes from the London Innercity Faith Team (LIFT), comprised of the 11 downtown churches including the First Christian Reformed Church, which has been a strong advocate for the establishing of the Youth Action Centre. LIFT supports the centre with money, food and other material goods and also offered to supply appliances for the new facility, still in preparation by the city.

The present cramped and inconvenient location at 388 Dundas Street is to be replaced by new quarters with more space that will enable an extension of programs and workshops. Linda Carmichael hopes the move to the new centre in the Market Tower, 151 Dundas Street, will take place in December.

Because of the limited funds from provincial and federal governments, the centre has to rely increasingly on the help from the community. With the availability of more room and overall better facilities in the near future, a plan is being proposed to involve volunteer seniors in the programs.

Seniors can have a positive

Developing self-worth

The staff plans the creation of an environment of mutual respect where values, skills and experiences can be shared freely. They hope to accomplish more through an open communication than by preaching and teaching. By giving seniors a chance to reach out to these often demoralized and neglected youth the seniors can become instrumental in the process of healing and the development of self-worth.

In spite of limited space and resources, the hard-working and dedicated staff and volunteers have made the centre an example for other youth-oriented institutions. It is hoped that with the continuous communal effort, more youth "at risk" will achieve a greater stability in their life so that they are able to cope with the demands of modern times.

Lacombe deacons and supporters harvest more than barley



Raymond J. Schraa

LACOMBE, Alta. — While two red-tailed hawks silently circled overhead, 13 combines noisily gobbled up swaths of barley on 140 acres of land.

It was a festive climax of a community project, entitled A Christian Response to Hunger, that had its beginning in early spring. An enthusiastic crowd of volunteers gathered for a barbecue lunch on Jet Spring Farms on Saturday, Sept. 14. The occasion? Getting ready for a special harvest. And what a harvest it was! Ray Prins brief-

ly shared what was happening and prayed that this event might be a blessing to many people who are in need.

At a suggestion of George Weenink, the deacons of the Woodynook Christian Reformed Church got involved with helping to feed some of the world's hungry by growing grain for the Canadian Foodgrains Bank, of which the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee is one of the founding members.

After some deliberation it became a community project, with many volunteers working together determined to make it a success. Land was rented at \$35 an acre, plus \$10 an acre for insurance; \$12,000 was donated towards the project, as well as seed and fertilizer.

Herb Ten Hove stressed that it was with the Lord's blessing that an estimated 10,000 bushels were harvested in just over two hours of time. With government support that translates into some \$150,000 to help those who are in need in developing countries.

The hawks still circled high above the field when the harvest was finished. The sun broke through the clouds, blessing the helping hands for needy people. It truly was a Christian response to hunger.